

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED NOV 5 1981

DATE ENTERED NOV 30 1981

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME** Fort Hancock Life-Saving Station

HISTORIC

The Spmaceti Cove No. 2 Life-Saving Service Station

AND/OR COMMON

Fort Hancock Life-Saving Station

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

North of Highlands on Sandy Hook

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Highlands NJ

VICINITY OF

3rd

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

New Jersey

34

Monmouth

025

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE

SITE

OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC

PRIVATE

BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS

BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

NO

## PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

COMMERCIAL

PARK

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

MILITARY

OTHER

**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

National Park Service, North Atlantic Region

STREET &amp; NUMBER

15 State Street

CITY, TOWN

Boston

VICINITY OF

STATE

Massachusetts

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Monmouth County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Princeton

STATE

New Jersey

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT  
☒ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED  
☐ ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Although the first Fort Hancock Life-Saving Station was built in 1848, the present building dates from 1894. Built about 1,000 feet from the 1848 site, the shingle style building is a 1-and-1/2-story office section, with a 2-bay boathouse on one end and a 4-story tower on the front with a pyramid roof (facing the sea). The second story of the tower is connected to the pitched roof of the office section by an enlarged dormer form whose walls are flush with the sides of the tower. The boathouse has a shallow pitched roof and a pair of double doors facing the sea.

The fourth floor of the tower has a cantilevered balcony on all four sides which is supported on framing principals. The office section has a central chimney, a jerkin head gable with an entrance door which is reached by means of an exterior stair of two colinear flights with a landing between. There is also a bent dormer on each side and a front porch which encloses the base of the tower.

The porch was closed in in the 1930s with weather boards and the main entrance was placed there.

Excluding the porch the entire building is shingled. The windows are chiefly pairs of 1-over-1 sash type, with 1-pane casement windows set into the tower. The railings on the balcony and exterior stair and the framing principals are cleanly articulated with simple rectangular balusters and struts. This together with their date (c. 1914) suggests a strong craftsman influence. There is also a 40-foot mast stepped on the balcony.

The structure is located east of Hartshorne Drive on a sandy knoll which overlooks the Atlantic Ocean. When constructed in 1894, the life-saving station stood over 800 yards from the ocean. Beach erosion, however, has reduced that distance to 150 feet.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1894-1949

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Spmaceti Cove No. 2 Life-Saving Service Station is significant because of its association with the earliest Federally sponsored efforts to save life and property from coastal shipwrecks. The station was built in 1894,<sup>1</sup> and up until 1949,<sup>2</sup> the U.S. Life-Saving Service (USLSS) conducted rescue missions from this building. The U.S.L.S.S. was the parent organization of the U.S. Coast Guard which was founded in 1915.<sup>3</sup>

Spmaceti Cove was one of six (or eight)<sup>4</sup> original U.S.L.S.S. New Jersey coastal sites. The first U.S.L.S.S. station on this location was erected in May of 1849<sup>5</sup> on land controlled by the War Department. In 1894<sup>6</sup> the present structure was built about 1,000 feet from the old station site.

The long tradition of heroic rescue efforts at Sandy Hook's Spmaceti Cove ended in 1949 when the 1894 station was decommissioned as an active U.S. Coast Guard Station. By 1962<sup>7</sup> it housed administrative offices for a New Jersey State Park. Since 1974<sup>8</sup> it has served as a visitors' center for the Gateway National Recreation Area.

The U.S. Life Saving Stations of 1855, 1872, and 1891<sup>9</sup> built to the north of Spmaceti Cove have all disappeared. Relatively unaltered, the 1894 Spmaceti Cove No. 1 Life-Saving Station is an important example of late-19th-century New Jersey coastal utilitarian architecture.

<sup>1</sup>Tom Hoffman, acting Park Historian to Marlene Rockmore, acting regional historian (March 23, 1979), National Park Service, North Atlantic Regional Office.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Date courtesy of Boston U.S. Coast Guard--Office of Public Affairs.

<sup>4</sup>Hoffman to Rockmore

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>David N. Poinsett, Supervisor, Historic Sites (letter of June 18, 1975).

<sup>7</sup>Hoffman to Rockmore

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Records, U.S. Life-Saving Service - U.S. Coast Guard.  
Records Group 26 National Archives.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	8
ZONE	EASTING

5	8	6	1	3	0
NORTHING					

4	4	7	5	3	8	0
NORTHING						

B 

ZONE	EASTING

NORTHING					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See boundary on enclosed site map.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
New Jersey	34	Monmouth	025
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Ricardo Torres-Reyes, Historian & Jonathan Fricker, N.J., H.S.S.

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service, North Atlantic Region 4/75, updated 3/80

STREET & NUMBER

15 State Street

CITY OR TOWN

Boston

DATE

TELEPHONE

617 223-3778

STATE

Massachusetts

## 12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ☐

NO ☐

NONE ☐

SEE XEROX OF ORIGINAL FORM

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ☒ National ☐ State ☐ Local

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

Assistant Director,  
Cultural Resources

DATE

NOV 2 1981

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

11/30/81

9<sup>th</sup> DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ROAD TO HIGHLANDS

ROAD TO STATION

OLD  
STATION

STATION

ROAD TO BEACH

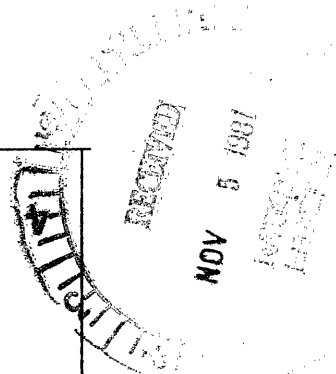
200'

200'

200'

SCALE: 2" = 100'

SPERMACETI COVE COAST GUARD STATION



NOV 30 1981